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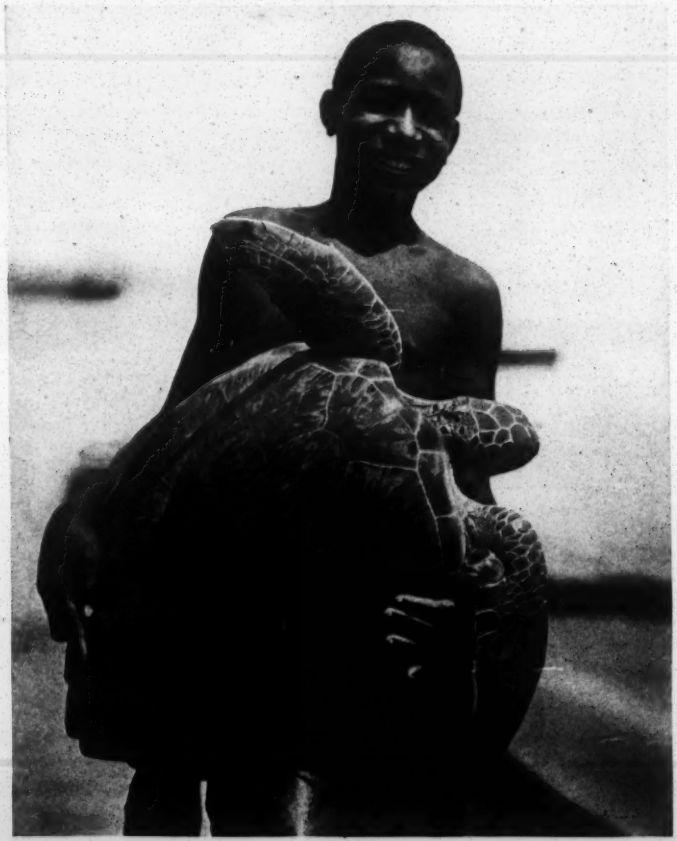

LUIS MARDEN

GREEN TURTLE, DELIGHT OF DINERS, IS A PRIZE VENEZUELAN CATCH: LA GUAIRA (Bulletin No. 1)

LIMI

Bulletin No. 1, October 25, 1948

Spirit of Gran Colombia Lives Again

DURING the 1820's a large, diverse country called Gran Colombia sprawled across South America's northwest shoulder from Peru to the Guianas. After a little more than a decade of freedom from Spain, it broke into pieces.

Today the spirit of Gran Colombia lives again as its component parts —Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, and Panama—embark on a 10-year program calling for a customs union of the four countries, freedom of transit, a Gran Colombia bank, a common air merchant fleet, a unified social security system, a single currency, and many other features of economic, industrial, and cultural cooperation.

Mountains Are Barriers Between and Within Countries

The customs union, permitting the products of any one country to be sold in the other three without payment of customs duties, has already been voted by the four countries.

Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Panama spread over a spectacularly varied region where high mountains or dense rain forests separate not only the individual countries but the fertile and populous regions within a single nation. Formal Spanish cities and grass-roofed Indian villages thickly dot the mild-climated highlands between mountain ranges.

In 1819, when the Latin American nations were fighting their way out of the Spanish Empire, the people of these four territories won their independence and set up the Republic of Gran (Greater) Colombia. They made Simón Bolívar, the great liberator who had led their successful fight for freedom, president.

The unit lasted a little over a decade. A few months after Bolívar's death, it split into the individual republics of Venezuela, Ecuador, and Nueva (new) Granada. The latter included Panama. In 1903, after a revolt involving the building of the Panama Canal, Panama broke off from Nueva Granada, which by then had changed its name to Colombia.

Pan American Highway Links Three Countries

The United States-built and -operated Panama Canal is the sea-lane short cut that makes the customs union possible. Without it, Ecuador's Pacific port of Guayaquil and Venezuela's Maracaibo, on the Caribbean, would be more than 11,000 miles apart around the continent instead of 1,690 miles through the canal. Common shipping interests, developed since the canal's construction, caused Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador to set up a joint merchant fleet several years ago.

Inland transport is not so well developed, except for a comprehensive air system. An important segment of the Pan American Highway (illustration, inside cover) now extends from La Guaira (illustration, cover) through western Venezuela, across Colombia, and deep into Ecuador.

The big breaks in the Pan American Highway are in the rough moun-

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W. ROBERT MOORE

NOW THAT THE PAN AMERICAN HIGHWAY SERVES THEIR TOWN OF CAYAMBE, ECUADOREAN INDIANS GO TO MARKET BY BUS

Here, having sold their produce, they prepare to go aboard for the bouncing, rattling homeward ride. One of the Pan American Highway's most useful stretches is the all-weather route that connects the capitals of the three countries across South America's northwest shoulder—Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador (Bulletin No. 1).

"Extinct" Strandloopers Found in Africa

THE extinction of a primitive African people called the Strandloopers, like Mark Twain's death, may have been exaggerated, according to a recent report from the Administrator of South-West Africa.

Traveling in the coastal Namib Desert, near Zesfontein, this official of the Union of South Africa's trusteeship territory came on remnants of the Strandlooper group long referred to as extinct in most reference and ethnological books. Archeologists have studied and reported on their culture through skeleton and other remains found in ancient South African caves and shelters (illustration, next page).

Linked with Hottentots and Bushmen

The name Strandlooper literally means "shore runner." It indicates the way of life of these people who have always been associated with coastal regions.

Racially, the Strandloopers are linked with the African Bushmen and Hottentots. Some ethnologists call them a group of Bushmen who simply adapted their lives to their coastal environment.

Several scientific theories have been advanced to explain the "Bushman-Hottentot-Strandlooper puzzle." One theory holds that the Strandloopers are "ethnically older" than Bushmen and Hottentots in South Africa; another says that they are the "purest," or oldest, race; and still another states that the term Strandlooper should be used solely to apply to Hottentot tribes which live on the west coast or to Bushmen who formerly inhabited the south coast. The small tribe of 50 Strandloopers met with near Zesfontein, at any rate, inhabit a largely Hottentot area.

Today's Strandloopers are reported still to be living in the primitive fashion ascribed to their ancestors, eating shellfish baked in ashes, and adding to their meager diet such delicacies as small rodents, lizards, and insects.

600-foot Sand Dunes along Shore

Their surroundings are harsh and inhospitable. The Namib Desert, west and southwest of the Zesfontein settlement, stretches its desolate length 850 miles along the Atlantic coast of South-West Africa.

Away from a few tree-bordered streams, this desert is mostly a barren waste of rocky, sandy flats and hills, with sand dunes near the shore that are blown by high winds to heights of 600 feet and more. When the infrequent rains come, however, the desert blooms with green vegetation, attracting considerable small game, including the graceful springbok, or African gazelle.

A rare and strange plant of the Namib is the welwitschia—protected against destruction by heavy penalties. Found only in the southwest African deserts, it is largely an underground, water-storing root that pushes just above ground two broad leaves stretched in opposite directions.

It is far to the southeast of Zesfontein, around the sweeping coastal

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tain country of eastern Panama and northwest Colombia, and in southern Ecuador, leading to Peru. East and south of the settled highlands, modern transportation almost disappears in hot, river-veined lowlands given over to wilderness and untamed Indian tribes.

Together, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Panama cover nearly a million square miles of territory, with perhaps 18,000,000 people. Behind individual boundaries, each state unrolls its own assortment of geographic scenery and home-grown commodities.

Since the customs-union nations are all within tropical range (the Equator crosses both Ecuador and Colombia) they grow many of the same farm crops. The valuable hardwoods and other forest products also are similar. Each country, however, has its own specialty exports.

Venezuela is one of the world's leading oil sources. Colombian coffee is famous. Ecuador, which makes most of the so-called Panama hats, supplied war-needed cinchona bark, scarce rubber, and light balsa wood. Panama helps balance its books with a special "money crop" gained by catering to American servicemen, and travelers brought by the Panama Canal.

NOTE: The countries of the new Latin American customs union may be located on the National Geographic Society's map of South America. Write the Society's headquarters for a price list of maps.

For further information, see "Quinine Hunters in Ecuador," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for March, 1946*; "Panama, Bridge of the World," November, 1941*; "Hail Colombia!" October, 1940; and "Caracas, Cradle of the Liberator," April, 1940. *(Issues marked with an asterisk are included in a special list of Magazines available to teachers in packets of ten for $1.00.)*

See also, in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS, October 6, 1947, "Gateway Guayaquil Ships Ecuador's Products"; and "Venezuela, Farming Nation That Struck Oil, Changes Governments," November 12, 1945.

AMOS BURG

EXPERT EYES APPRAISE EMERALDS FROM COLOMBIA'S MUZO FIELD, 65 MILES NORTH OF BOGOTÁ

DP's Starting for America Know Trades

SINCE Red Sea waters parted and Moses led the Children of Israel on the road to the Promised Land, the world has seen no more dramatic population shift than war brought to western Europe, recently wrote Frederick Simpich, veteran staff writer for the National Geographic Society.

And still the human tide rolls on.

By the end of 1947, fully 6,700,000 displaced persons, or "DP's," had been returned to their homes. These included fugitives, slave laborers, prisoners of war, and lost children.

Many Without a Country

But today there remain, in the western zones of Germany and Austria (illustration, next page), fully 800,000 more homeless people, whose destiny rests in the hands of the Allies, including Uncle Sam. In the American-occupied area of Germany, under American army control, are camps which hold about 450,000. These folk cannot or will not return to their former homes for fear of persecution for racial or political reasons.

Among these latter are thousands who are "stateless"; that is, they came from such once-independent lands as Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania, now merged into the Soviet Union, and so have no passports.

Of particular interest to Americans now is the fact that, by Act of Congress, some 205,000 of these DP's will soon be on their way to the United States. There, in time, those who qualify will be naturalized, and take their place as citizens.

To see what kind of citizens they may make, Simpich reports he talked with scores at DP camps, and questioned American army officers who help look after them.

Many said they would accept any fate rather than go back to lands ruled by communists. Only one, a girl, said she pined for the communist-controlled land of her birth.

Police Their Own Camps

Doctors, lawyers, editors, engineers, skilled workers, and common laborers compose these camps. At Hanau camp its artist colony was having a display of its paintings the day Simpich arrived; women were making clothes from old uniforms, tents, blankets, and other scrap material supplied by the American army. Girls donned holiday dress, played accordians and guitars, and sang and danced.

These refugees police their own camps. They run their own schools, and build chapels from bombed-out ruins. Their own doctors treat them with American army medicines, and general health is good.

About three-fifths of all adult male DP's are working now, earning a little at jobs they find in towns outside their camps.

In machine and woodworking shops, and in a radio shop, Simpich continues, he saw young boys learning trades. They told him they wanted to be sure of getting jobs when they reached the United States—or Canada—or whatever country will take them.

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curve of South Africa, that archeologists discovered the significant Strandlooper remains in cliff caves and shelters. These relics of a former community there were found on various levels, and included fragmentary human remains, animal and fish bones, as well as stone implements and pottery related to, yet differing from, cultural relics of Bushmen.

NOTE: The region where Strandloopers have been discovered is shown on the Society's map of Africa.

For additional information on South-West Africa and the primitive peoples of the area, see "Keeping House for the 'Shepherds of the Sun'," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for April, 1930.

See also, in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS, November 18, 1946, "South-West Africa Wants to Join Union."

SOUTH AFRICAN RAILWAYS & HARBORS

"OPEN SEASON ON DEER" MIGHT BE THE TITLE OF THIS BUSHMAN PAINTING IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Armed men are realistically pictured mingling with the great migrating herd. They are killing for food. Cave art and relics left behind by the Strandloopers identify them as similar to, but distinct from, the Bushmen. In fact, such primitive art wherever found seems similar in treatment, subject, and technique.

American Masters in the National Gallery: A Reprint

With the finest of color printing, this reprint from the September, 1948, *National Geographic Magazine* presents in their true splendor 24 paintings by America's greatest masters. Each painting occupies a full page. The series is a representative selection from the American collection of the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.

An article by John Walker, Chief Curator of the Gallery, gives a penetrating evaluation of these paintings, as well as interesting historical notes. Providing a cross section of the best canvases produced by the American School of painting in 200 years, this booklet is a valuable cultural asset for home, school, or public library. It contains 30 pages, 7 x 10 inches. 50¢ each in the United States and elsewhere.

Notice of change in book list: The book, *Classic Greece and the Aegean*, described in previous GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS, is now out of print and is therefore no longer available.

Bulletin No. 4, October 25, 1948

Eel Wriggles Way to Top of Nutrition List

MISS Fish of 1948 might be the title recently won by the wriggling eel—the snakelike fish with the undershot jaw and the oddly arranged scales. A Scottish scientist has placed eel fillets at the top of a list of ten nutritious sea foods. This list-compiler maintains that his fellow countrymen allow a prejudice against eels to deprive them of a valuable food.

If disdained in Scotland, however, the eel is reported so popular in England that large numbers are imported. Among the many edible fish consumed in western Europe, the eel is a favorite, from Italy to the Scandinavian countries.

A Tonic to the Japanese

Roasted, baked, boiled, fried, pickled, or jellied, eel meat has long been enjoyed by Europeans and Asians. The Romans considered it a delicacy. French recipes call for "drowning" the fish in wine and then stewing it.

In Japan (illustration, next page) eels have been eaten since ancient times as a remedy for summer lassitude—a custom comparable to the early American one of giving children sulphur and molasses as a spring tonic. The season is officially opened each year on a designated day and all who can find and afford them feast on eels.

The Wends, who live in the Spreewald—the marshy Oder River region of eastern Germany—have given the eel an honored place in song and folklore as well as on the dinner table. A traveler to that district has observed that a Spreewald home without eel traps would be like a chicken farm without a chicken coop.

Americans generally have found the snakelike appearance of eels unappetizing. But there are markets in New York and a few other cities where they are sold, particularly for special occasions. To supply the traditional Italian dinner on Christmas Eve, bargeloads of large St. Lawrence eels are added to the usual catch from east-coast streams.

A Dane Solved Mysterious Life Story

In private life the familiar fresh-water eel is one of the oddest of fish. For more than 2,000 years its origin was a mystery. Aristotle asserted that eels grew out of mud. Izaak Walton said they came from horsehair in the water. One tale spinner "proved" that they were born of beetles.

The actual breeding grounds and earliest life stages of the eel were discovered by a Danish scientist, who in 1905 began a long series of ocean cruises and laboratory studies. It was already well known that in the fall mature female eels in upriver haunts would suddenly stop eating, change to silver color, and start downstream. In coastal waters they would be joined by the males, and set out for an unknown sea destination.

The investigation finally disclosed that the objective, both for European and for American eels, was in the deep Atlantic waters north and northeast of the West Indies. Still later, another central breeding place on the other side of the world was located in the Indian Ocean.

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In a test for occupational skills made by Lieutenant Colonel Jerry Sage of the United States Army, in which about 185,000 DP's were screened, he found only 51,018 unskilled workers. There were 53,168 skilled workers, 40,213 experienced in forestry and agriculture, about 11,480 office workers, and 440 chemists. Others listed included 1,595 engineers, miners, metal workers, professional men, teachers, and those skilled in transportation, health, and sanitation work.

There are, of course, thousands of children, many of whom were born in the camps.

As of July, 1948, Canada had asked for 20,000 DP's. Canada wants farmers. Belgium has already taken 30,000 coal miners. Thousands of others, usually possessing mining skill, have gone to the British Isles and to Sweden.

Australia reports herself well pleased with her DP immigrants, so far, and so does Norway. France, the Netherlands, Brazil, Venezuela, Argentina, and Paraguay are among other countries which so far have taken a few migrants.

The Allies hope that all western European DP's may be settled within two years from now.

NOTE: For additional information, see "What I Saw Across the Rhine," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for January, 1947; and "Americans Help Liberated Europe Live Again," June, 1945.

U. S. ARMY SIGNAL CORPS, OFFICIAL

AT A SALZBURG REFUGEE CAMP, POLISH ORPHANS CHEERFULLY AWAIT A MORE PERMANENT HOME

With a roof over their heads and meals every day, this quartette of displaced children can forget the cold and hunger of their war-disrupted years—their entire lives. Now they are cared for, under the Allied rehabilitation program, at this DP camp in the Austrian Alps, until homes can be found for them, perhaps in America.

Bulletin No. 5, October 25, 1948

Finding of Cairn Recalls Peary's Exploits

THE recent finding of records left in a far-northern rock mound, or cairn, by Rear Admiral Robert E. Peary wakened old memories among the far-flung membership of the National Geographic Society. The Society had helped sponsor Peary's discovery of the North Pole (April 6, 1909) and the *National Geographic Magazine*, from 1899 to 1910, published in many articles almost a running account of the events leading up to that discovery.

The records just found were deposited by Peary in the course of his unsuccessful expedition of 1905-06. His skipper, the late Bob Bartlett, had pushed the specially built ship *Roosevelt* through the narrow waters between Canada's Ellesmere Island and Greenland until completely stopped by ice at Cape Sheridan, near the northeast corner of Ellesmere.

Helped by Eskimos and Dogs

There Peary found a cairn with records of the British expedition of 1875-76 led by Captain Sir George S. Nares. Following the custom of far-north explorers—that finders are keepers, but replace what you find—he copied these and put the copies with his own handwritten records in the cairn. The United States Navy-Coast Guard task force which made the recent find took both sets of records, but again, according to custom, placed copies of the documents in the cairn for posterity.

From the ship at Cape Sheridan, Peary and his men carried supplies 90 miles northwestward to Cape Hecla through the autumn weeks of 1905. Several Eskimo families and some 200 dogs made a practical Arctic working party. With his ablest dog-driver, Matt Henson, who was to stand with him at the North Pole three years later, Peary awaited the Arctic dawn for a run toward the Pole.

Late in February, 1906, the northward dash started with sledges and dogs. Delayed by extreme adversity in weather, ice, and open water, the leader stood on April 21 at man's farthest north—174 miles short of the Pole. Exhausted and hungry, he felt only great despair despite his feat.

About June 1, the tired party got back to its ship at Cape Sheridan. Resting briefly, the indomitable Peary started a 1,000-mile round-trip march westward to survey the land coast of Ellesmere and Axel Heiberg islands. The party returned to civilization in November, 1906.

MacMillan Found One Cairn

The Cape Sheridan cairn was not the first to come to light of those left behind by the explorer during his 1905-06 Arctic travels. Nor is it the last to await discovery.

On Cape Thomas Hubbard at the northern tip of Axel Heiberg Island some 400 hard-hiking miles southwest of Cape Sheridan, Peary planted a tin can containing a small piece of the American flag and a paper bearing his name and the date—June 28, 1906. There it was found eight years later by Donald B. MacMillan.

In mid-June, 1906, Admiral (then Commander) Peary placed records in a cairn at Cape Columbia, Ellesmere Island, northernmost land of North

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In these deep-sea areas, each year's young are spawned. The parents die. The baby eels are hatched into flat, transparent bits of life. As they slowly swim toward their respective homelands, the young grow at first into flat, cigar-shaped forms. When near the coast, they shrink, turning into the round, slim "elvers" which eventually will become adult eels and start the cycle again.

One of the points of difference between the European and the American eel is that the latter matures much earlier. It remains an elver only a year, while the European elver does not mature for about three years. The American eel has fewer vertebrae—from 104 to 111, as compared to the 111 to 118 of its European counterpart.

NOTE: For additional information on sea food, see "Fishing in the Lofotens" and "Shad in the Shadow of Skyscrapers," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for March, 1947; "The Delectable Shrimp," October, 1944; "Tuna Harvest of the Sea," September, 1940*; "Caviar Fishermen of Romania," March, 1940; "Fishing in Pacific Coast Streams," February, 1939*; and "Treasures of the Pacific," October, 1938*.

See also, in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS, October 21, 1946, "Shrimp Brings Big Industry to Louisiana."

AT AN EEL HATCHERY IN JAPAN, A KEEPER FEEDS SEAFOOD TO THE SEAFOOD

A greenish-brown mass of writhing eels—destined for human diners—dine themselves, on sardines tossed to them by a keeper. Before dishing out the feed, the thrifty Japanese bones the sardines so that the little fish serve the dual purpose of nourishing the eels—here raised for market—and fertilizing the soil. There are many varieties of eels. Some, such as the conger, have a slimy, scaleless skin; other have small scales set in groups at angles to other groups.

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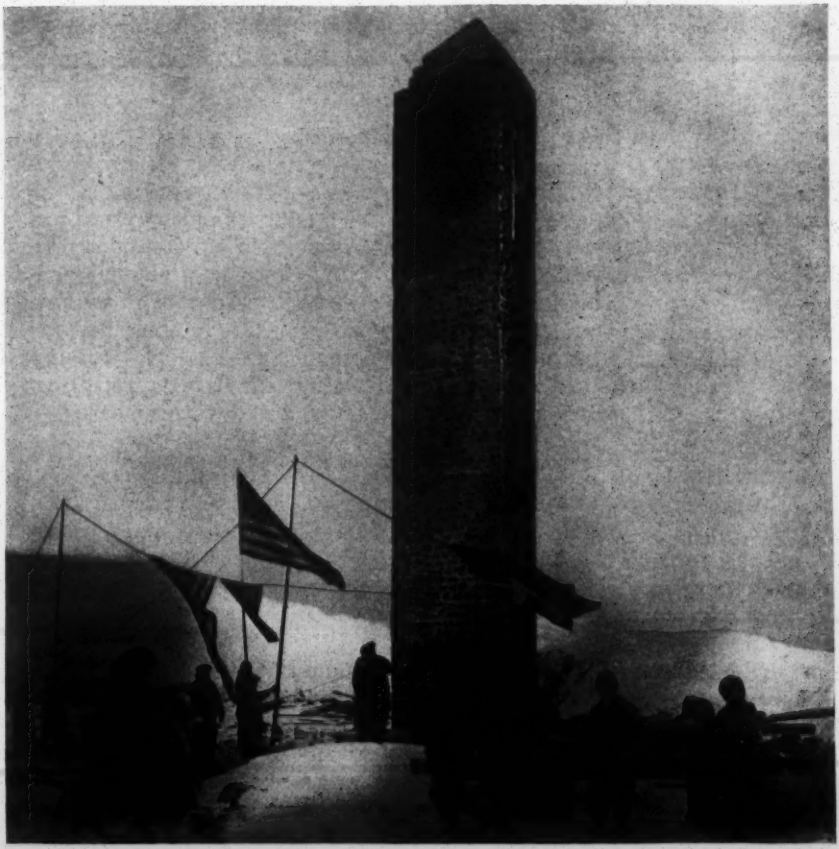
America. Also, he had cached documents on the polar ice at 87 degrees, 6 minutes north latitude—the fateful spot where he decided to turn back short of the Pole. While exploring Greenland's Arctic coast six years earlier, he had built a cairn on Kap (Cape) Morris Jesup, northernmost known land.

Cape Sheridan was "end of the line" for the *Roosevelt* again in 1908 at the beginning of Peary's successful North Pole expedition. Though to the American went the glory of first reaching the Pole, brave men of many nations helped push the Arctic frontier northward. This was done a few miles at a time in a day when exploration was confined to surface travel.

NOTE: Points discovered by Arctic explorers may be located on the Society's Map of Canada, Alaska & Greenland.

For additional information on Arctic exploration, consult the *National Geographic Magazine Cumulative Index, 1899-1947*. This volume is available at the Society's headquarters for $2.50. Material is entered under "Arctic Regions," and Bartlett, Greely, MacMillan, and Peary, explorers identified with the Society who have contributed articles on the subject.



ROBERT A. BARTLETT

FROM THE SNOW OF GREENLAND'S BLEAK KAP (CAPE) YORK, IN THE AREA OF HIS ARCTIC EXPLORATIONS, RISES A STATELY MONUMENT TO PEARY